

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION

Replace the paragraph beginning at page 8, line 1, with the following replacement paragraph:

Each call agent 46 is configured for communication with the signaling gateway 44 via the IP network 20, in compliance with the above-incorporated proposals by the IETF Sigtran Working Group, including RFC 2719, RFC 3332, and the IETF Draft by Loughney et al. on SUA. In particular, each of the ASPs 46 is assigned an Application Server (AS) identity, for example AS1 [[46a]] 48a or AS2 [[46b]] 48b. Hence, each Application Server [[46a]] 48a and [[46b]] 48b is defined as having at least one assigned ASP, and each ASP 46 is preferably assigned to one and only one AS 48.

Replace the paragraph beginning at page 8, line 7, with the following replacement paragraph:

As described below, the signaling gateway 44 includes a routing key table having routing keys, ~~were~~ where each routing key specifies prescribed signaling parameter values that enable the signaling gateway 44 to map a received signaling message 52 to an AS 48. Hence, the signaling gateway 44 identifies an ASP 46 for processing a MSU 50 from a received signaling message 52 based on identifying a matching routing key entry for an AS 48 that specifies routing key parameters (i.e., message signaling unit attributes) that match specified parameters (i.e., attributes) of the received signaling message 52; once the signaling gateway 44 has identified the matching ~~ready~~ routing key entry for the matching AS 48, the signaling gateway 44 identifies an active ASP 46 assigned to the matching AS 48 that is to receive the MSU within the received signaling message 52.

Replace the paragraph beginning at page 11, line 27, with the following replacement paragraph:

Figure 6 is a diagram illustrating the method of controlling congestion for multiple ASP groups sharing a single signaling point code using respective group congestion ~~that~~ levels,

according to an embodiment of the present invention. The steps described herein with respect to Figure 6 can be implemented as executable code stored on a computer readable medium (e.g., floppy disk, hard disk, EEPROM, CD-ROM, etc.), or propagated via a computer readable transmission medium (e.g., fiber optic cable, electrically-conductive transmission line medium, wireless electromagnetic medium, etc.).